



# Iowa General Assembly

## 2011 Committee Briefings

Legislative Services Agency – Legal Services Division

<http://www.legis.iowa.gov/Schedules/committee.aspx?GA=84&CID=543>

### STATE FISH AND GAME PROTECTION FUND STUDY COMMITTEE

**Meeting Dates:** [November 16, 2011](#)

**Purpose.** *This compilation of briefings on legislative interim committee meetings and other meetings and topics of interest to the Iowa General Assembly, written by the Legal Services Division staff of the nonpartisan Legislative Services Agency, describes committee activities or topics. The briefings were originally distributed in the Iowa Legislative Interim Calendar and Briefing. Official minutes, reports, and other detailed information concerning the committee or topic addressed by a briefing can be obtained from the committee's Internet page listed above, from the Iowa General Assembly's Internet page at <http://www.legis.iowa.gov/index.aspx>, or from the agency connected with the meeting or topic described.*

### STATE FISH AND GAME PROTECTION FUND STUDY COMMITTEE

November 16, 2011

**Co-Chairperson:** Senator Dennis Black

**Co-Chairperson:** Representative Henry V. Rayhons

**Background.** The Legislative Council established an interim study committee pursuant to 2011 Iowa Acts, S.F. 509, to hold one meeting in order to review expenditures from the State Fish and Game Protection Fund (fund) by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

**Overview.** The Committee elected Senator Black and Representative Rayhons Co-Chairpersons. Presentations were provided by the Legislative Services Agency (LSA) and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

**Presentation—LSA, Fiscal Services Division.** The Committee considered a presentation by Ms. Deb Kozel, LSA Senior Fiscal Analyst. She discussed the fund's revenue sources (e.g., hunting and fishing licenses, federal moneys, sales income, income tax refund donations, and interest) and expenditures (e.g., legislative appropriations), and the department's support of capital projects and contingencies. Ms. Kozel answered questions from Committee members relating to the use of moneys for capital projects and the use of the lake restoration funds to support dredging operations.

**Panel Presentation—DNR, Conservation and Recreation Division.** The Committee considered a panel presentation by division staff, including Mr. Chuck Corell, Division Administrator; Mr. Dale Garner, Wildlife Bureau Chief; Mr. Bob Garrison, Law Enforcement Bureau Chief; and Mr. Joe Larscheid, Fisheries Bureau Chief. Members of the panel discussed the operations of their respective bureaus.

Mr. Corell led the panel in discussing the fund's financial condition. The estimated total economic effect in this state from fish and wildlife recreation in 2006 was \$1.54 billion. The sources of fund revenue include hunting and fishing license fees, federal aid (including through the Pittman-Robertson Act of 1937 and the Dingell-Johnson Act of 1950), fish and wildlife habitat fees, boat registration fees, all-terrain vehicle and snowmobile fees, miscellaneous fees, and the balance carry-forward from previous years, all equaling \$66,981,370. In fiscal year 2010-2011, expenditures were used to support wildlife (\$15,063,317), enforcement (\$12,134,386), fisheries (\$10,672,470), capital projects (\$10,392,096), and administration (\$1,059,067), with a balance carry-forward (\$17,362,884). In FY 2010-2011, DNR paid property taxes to counties (\$755,885), but not all those moneys were paid from the fund. In Iowa, public land equals 780,000 acres with DNR holding 350,000 acres. According to Mr. Corell, by FY 2015-2016, the fund is expected to have a deficit of \$301,506.

**Committee Questions and Comments.** The Committee members asked a number of questions and also made comments. Specifically, several Committee members raised questions regarding the use of constitutionally protected fees. Senator Dearden asked about the constitutionality of using licensing fees to support the Help Us Stop Hunger (HUSH) program. Senator Black asked about the constitutionality of using licensing fees to support water trail improvement. Senator Black also discussed the issue of increasing license fees to preserve the fund. Representative Rayhons discussed the decline in the state's pheasant population, the acquisition of land by DNR, and the issuance of nonresident deer hunting licenses. Representative Curtis Hanson asked about the prevalence of deer in this state, and efforts to reduce the doe population. Representative Jeff Smith discussed possible causes for the decline in pheasants and DNR's control of invasive aquatic species which pose a threat to Iowa's lakes.

**Record of Testimony.** The Committee received and filed the testimony provided to provide a record for further legislative

consideration.

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